



Choose Your Starting Weight™

The right starting resistance feels challenging enough to require effort while still allowing steady, controlled form.



Your starting weight may be different for every exercise. Begin lighter when learning a new movement.

1



Practice the Movement First

Try the exercise without added weight or with the lightest available resistance. Make sure the movement feels comfortable and controlled.

2



Choose a Light Starting Resistance

Select a weight or band you feel confident you can control. It is easier to add resistance than to recover from starting too heavy.

3



Complete a Test Set

Perform 8 controlled repetitions. Breathe normally and stop if your form changes or you feel pain.

4



5 or More

Likely Too Light

Increase slightly if the exercise feels very easy.



2 or 3 More

About Right

The last repetitions feel challenging, but form remains steady.



0 or 1 More

Likely Too Heavy

Reduce the resistance if you are straining or losing control.

5



Record What Worked

Write down the exercise, resistance and how it felt so you have a useful starting point next time.

Signs the Resistance Is About Right

- ☐ I can use a comfortable range of motion.
- ☐ I can breathe without holding my breath.
- ☐ The movement stays smooth and controlled.
- ☐ The final repetitions require focus.
- ☐ I could complete about 2 or 3 more with good form.

Adjust the Exercise, Not Just the Weight

Make It Easier

- Use less resistance
- Shorten the range
- Use support
- Choose a simpler variation

Add Challenge

- Increase resistance slightly
- Add a repetition
- Slow the lowering phase
- Choose a harder variation



Exercise: _____

Starting resistance: _____

Repetitions completed: _____



How it felt: Easy / About Right / Too Heavy



Gentle Reminder

The best starting weight is the one that lets you learn the movement safely and confidently.

Martine's Midlife Wellness Tip

Keep a small note on your phone. Remembering what you used last time makes the next session much easier.



When to Reduce or Stop

Reduce the resistance or stop for sharp pain, dizziness, unusual shortness of breath, new weakness, or loss of control.